

**Regional School District 14
Towns of Bethlehem and Woodbury**



*News from Our Schools
November 1, 2009*

Topic: What do we learn about Region 14 from the CMT and CAPT Results?

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In March 2009 Region 14, like all school districts in Connecticut, administered the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) to students in grades 3-8, and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) to high school sophomores. At all levels, students were assessed in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science. In July, we received the results. By now, you should have received a copy of your child(ren)'s test performance. If you have any questions concerning the information you received, please speak with your child's principal or guidance counselor. I'm writing today to share some of what the results tell us about the Region 14 schools.

Earlier this year, the Region 14 Board of Education adopted the following long term goal for our school system: **By June 2012, 85% of the students attending Region 14 schools will achieve goal on the Connecticut Mastery Test and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test.** As you will see in the chart below, the gap between where we are now and where we hope to be in June 2012 is greater on CAPT than on the CMT. We will continue to use 85% of our students achieving goal as our benchmark. Even more important than the percentage, however, is that we are actually looking for steady, continuous improvement toward the 85% mark and beyond at all grade levels. On the CMT, we will already have to raise the 85% standard at some grade levels in certain subject areas. Our current seventh grade students, for example, already achieved this goal in mathematics and reading, and are very close to goal in writing.

The chart below outlines the percentage of students at each grade level achieving goal in 2009:

Connecticut Mastery Test

Grade	Mathematics	Reading	Writing	Science
3	68.0%	64.8%	68.3%	
4	81.8%	70.4%	72.0%	
5	84.1%	77.2%	70.3%	72.4%
6	89.9%	85.2%	81.8%	
7	65.2%	77.0%	68.1%	
8	73.8%	80.8%	80.1%	83.1%

Connecticut Academic Performance Test

Grade 10	Mathematics	Reading for Understanding	Writing for Understanding	Science
Region 14	59.3%	55.0%	65.2%	54.7%
State Average	48.0%	47.5%	55.1%	43.0%

Here's what the data tell us:

- Our students, at every grade level, perform above the state average on both the CMT and the CAPT.
- This year there has been an increase in the percentage of students achieving goal in at least one area of the CMT at all grade levels over performance at the same grade level in 2008. Gains were noted in: Grade 3 – Reading; Grade 4 – Math and Writing; Grade 5 – Math, Reading, and Writing; Grade 6 – Math, Reading, and Writing; Grade 7 – Math; Grade 8 – Math, Reading, and Writing.
- The Growing With Mathematics program used with students in kindergarten through grade six is having a positive impact on student achievement as evidenced by improved performance of the same groups of students as they move from grade 3 to grade 4, from grade 4 to grade 5, and from grade 5 to grade 6.
- On an assessment of their mathematical abilities, Region 14's fourth and fifth grade students were surpassed by only one other school district in our Demographic Reference Group (DRG), a group of Connecticut towns the State Department of Education has determined have similar demographics as Region 14.
- Our students are reading more both in and outside of school, as evidenced by their performance on the state's reading assessment. We continue to see steady increases in the number of students achieving goal on reading measures.
- Almost 85% of our eighth grade students attained goal or advanced on the science assessment.
- Results of the 10th grade CAPT indicate that over 90% of our students are performing at the proficiency level. Our next level of work, however, is to provide them with regular opportunities to apply higher order thinking skills such as drawing inferences from text and evaluating the quality of text in their daily assignments.

We're proud of our students' accomplishments. At the same time, we recognize there's always room for improvement. For example, while our performance in the area of writing is good, we believe it can be better across all grades. Encouraging your child(ren) to practice both reading and writing at home would be extremely helpful in improving their performance in writing. Throughout the district, teachers are working tirelessly to prepare students not only for the state assessments, but also for their next level of work in school, and to provide them with the necessary skills to become successful, lifelong learners.

Thank you all for your continued support and cooperation.

Sincerely,
Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.
Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools